

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: November 20, 2001

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on November 16, 2001

FROM: William E. Muno, Director
Superfund Division

TO: Thomas V. Skinner
Regional Administrator

David A. Ullrich
Deputy Regional Administrator

The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities, other significant developments, training/conferences, and stakeholder feedback:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Removal Action Completed, National Auto Wrecking Site, Onalaska, Wisconsin

The removal action at the National Auto Wrecking site in Onalaska, Wisconsin, has been completed. The removal which began in August 2001 involved the excavation and chemical fixation of 14,000 tons of soil, and 500 tons of debris. The soil and debris were chemically fixated with phosphoric acid using the Meactite patented process and rendered non-hazardous. This allowed the material to be disposed of at the local LaCrosse County Landfill. The chemical fixation cost \$34 per ton, including fixation, transportation, and disposal. The total cost savings over hazardous waste landfill disposal (\$200 per ton) is estimated at \$2.4 million. In addition, 16 drums of waste flammable liquids were removed from underground and above ground tanks, and 1,200 tons of organic contaminated soil was removed and disposed of at the LaCrosse County Landfill.

A community availability and site tour was conducted with local government officials both at project start up and completion. The City of Onalaska, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) will coordinate redevelopment efforts. There are at least two developers interested in purchasing and redeveloping

the property. The City of Onalaska will be applying for a Brownfield Grant with the Wisconsin Department of Commerce to assist in tearing down the building. The WDNR will be installing monitoring wells on site to track the petroleum which has impacted the groundwater.

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Residential Cleanup Ended for the Season (Asbestos), Western Mineral Products Site, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The residential cleanup has ended for the season at the Western Mineral Products site, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. From August 6 to November 6, 2001, the U.S. EPA and its contractors removed asbestos contaminated materials from 77 residential properties in the Northeast Minneapolis area. Thirteen residential properties were completed during Phase I of the clean up, conducted in October 2000, and an additional 10 were started which required further work during Phase II. There are 46 properties already targeted for removal action, and approximately 70 are awaiting inspection to determine the presence of asbestos contaminated materials at surface level. This additional work will be conducted next Spring, when the weather conditions allow excavation. These properties became contaminated with waste products from the Western Mineral Products vermiculite exfoliation plant. For almost 50 years the exfoliation waste was made available to the public as "free backfill." Nearby residents used this material in their gardens, driveways, and throughout the yards. Federal, State, County, and City agencies have worked together in public outreach and education, as well as property inspections.

Contact: Sonia Vega (312-886-7191)

Settlement, VTC, Inc. (Doing Business As Polar Fab LLC), Bloomington, Minnesota

On November 8, 2001, the U.S. EPA entered into a Consent Agreement and Final Order to resolve a complaint issued on December 8, 2000, against this facility assessing \$240,750 in penalties. The complaint was issued for failing to submit a Hazardous Chemical Inventory form (Tier II) to the State Emergency Response Commission and the Bloomington Minnesota Fire Department as required under Section 312 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) for the 1997 and

1998. This was this facility's second violation. Six hazardous chemicals, three of which are extremely hazardous, were stored at this facility in excess of thresholds. VTC, Inc., will pay a civil penalty of \$36,800 and conduct six supplemental environmental projects (SEPs) totaling \$105,353, for a total settlement of \$142,153. The SEPs include the: 1) installation of degassifier membranes in the Reverse Osmosis system to replace the need for 15.5 tons of sodium hydroxide; 2) conversion from a carcinogenic Class I ozone-depleting cleaning agent to a non-carcinogenic, non-ozone depleting one; 3) reduction of replenish times, resulting in a 30 percent reduction in isopropyl alcohol; 4) reduction in the amount of sulfuric acid used at a manufacturing line; 5) installation of a scrubber for the EPI 4 exhaust to reduce City water use by over one million gallons per year; and, 6) addition of two more inlets to a scrubber to capture byproducts (hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, and perfluorocarbons) which are currently released into the air.

Contact: Ruth McNamara (312-353-3193)

Settlement, Indianapolis Water Company, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

On November 14, 2001, the U.S. EPA entered into a Consent Agreement and Final Order to resolve a complaint issued against Indianapolis Water Company, Inc. The Agency issued an administrative complaint against this facility assessing \$20,626 in penalties for failing to immediately notify the National Response Center (NRC) of an 8,000 gallon sodium hypochlorite release which occurred on October 20, 1999. Sodium hypochlorite is a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) hazardous substance with a 100-pound reportable quantity (RQ). This release was 80 times the RQ and was reported to the NRC 6 hours and 26 minutes after discovery of the release. The release resulted when an operator left on a pump all night that is used to fill small storage day tanks from large supply tanks. The newly installed day tank was designed to overflow back to the supply tanks, but piping was installed improperly, and sodium hypochlorite spilled out of the day tanks into the containment area, onto a floor, out two doors, onto a walkway, onto a driveway, and onto the ground. Of the 8,000 gallons released, 3,500 gallons entered into the environment. Indianapolis Water Company, Inc., has agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$3,351, and conduct a supplemental environmental project (SEP) totaling \$40,000, for a total settlement of \$43,351

to resolve this complaint. The Company will install a chemical containment area around its perimeter with an impervious concrete surface. This containment area will eliminate the possibility of a liquid release from this facility reaching the environment.

Contact: Ruth McNamara (312-353-3193)

Consent Decree Signed, Ionia City Landfill Superfund Site, Ionia, Michigan

On November 8, 2001, Wendy Carney signed the consent decree for the operation of the pump and treat system, and monitored natural attenuation (MNA) at the Ionia City Landfill Superfund site in Ionia, Michigan. The pump and treat system was installed in 1997/98 as a follow-up to the source removal action in 1994. The Record of Decision (ROD) signed in September of 2000 called for the continued operation of the system and MNA monitoring. The estimated cost of the potentially responsible party (PRP) lead remedy is \$2,000,000.

Contact: Tom Short (312-353-8826)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Region 5 Employees Assigned, Homeland Security Support Team, Washington, D.C.

From October 24 through November 11, 2001, Ginny Narsete from the Emergency Response/Brownfields section was assigned to the Homeland Security Support Team and the U.S. Post Office in Washington, D.C. Her work assignment entailed staffing the homeland security operations center as a liaison between the Homeland security office and U.S. EPA. During this time she submitted consequence management situation information for the daily reports, and worked with Federal and local agencies to identify and report threats, issues, activities, and actions relevant to bioterrorism and consequence management. She also monitored media outlets to identify new or potentially contentious issues, and provided media statements/talking points to the Office of Homeland Security for Governor Ridge briefings. After the homeland security rotation was completed, she advised the U.S. Post Office on the Incident Command System and assisted in organizing a Unified Command in handling Anthrax issues. As a result, the U.S. Post office has been working closely with the National Response team and has sought assistance from U.S. EPA on reviewing Anthrax protocol issues and handling internal

communication issues with distressed employees. Ralph Dollfhopf from Region 5 is assigned to the U.S. Post Office as an advisor on post office cleanup processes. The assignment for Ginny Narsete was part of the National Emergency Community Outreach team. Ms. Narsete is the Region 5 representative assigned to the national team.

Contact: Ginny Narsete (312-886-4359)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES

Annual Regional SERC Conference, Lansing, Michigan

On November 14 and 15, 2001, the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention held the Regional State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) Conference, at the Michigan State Police Hazardous Materials Training Center in Lansing, Michigan. Five of the six States were in attendance. The discussions were primarily focused on activities related to Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) and Risk Management Plans (RMP) of the Clean Air Act. Weapons of Mass Destruction and Counter Terrorism were also discussed. Each of the SERCs that sent representatives provided a report of activities that they have done in the previous year. The next meeting will be held in Columbus, Ohio, next November.

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Ninth Annual Indiana LEPC Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana

On November 9, 2001, Cheryl McIntyre of the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP) participated in the Ninth Annual Indiana Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. This conference provided LEPCs, State and local governments, emergency management agencies, and industry, an opportunity to discuss local hazardous materials planning and current Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) issues. Ms. McIntyre gave an update on OCEPP's continuing projects like the LEPC Plan Writing Workshop and the LEPC/Risk Management Plan Exercise Program. Ms. McIntyre also discussed OCEPP projects anticipated for next year.

Contact: Cheryl McIntyre (312-886-1964)

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Letter of Gratitude, Residential Cleanup (Asbestos), Western Mineral Products Site, Minneapolis, Minnesota

In a letter to On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Sonia Vega, the Mayor of Minneapolis, Sharon Sayles-Benton, says about the asbestos removal action in Northeast Minneapolis, "...I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to you and your excellent team of colleagues, including Fred Micke and Len Zintak, for your excellent work and dedication to the citizens of Minneapolis... Your constant communication and cooperation with state and local government staff was a major key to the success of the project... Mostly we are thankful for the way you went out of your way to accommodate the residents to minimize disruption of their lives... Your dedication to their needs has added a human dimension to our government work rather than continuing to appear as a 'command and control' type regulating bureaucracy."

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ORA State Coordinators
Regional Team Managers